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September 26, 2018: National Current Affairs

1. India reneges on deal to get power projects inspected

- India has postponed inspection of its two hydropower projects 1,000MW Pakal Dul and 48MW Lower Kanal by Pakistani experts on the pretext of some local issues.
- Sources see it as a possible impact of the recent cancellation of talks between the foreign ministers of the two countries on the sidelines of the 73rd session of the United Nations General Assembly in New York.
- It seems to be an fallout of the recent tension emerging with the cancellation of the talks by India as other issues are normally affected in a larger context in such situations.
- A nine-member team led by Indian commissioner for Indus waters Pradeep Kumar Saxena had visited Lahore last month and held talks for two days (Aug 29 and 30) with their Pakistani counterparts on water disputes on the platform of the Pakistan-India Permanent Commission for Indus Waters (PCIW)

2. Ahmad Awais takes charge as AGP

- Senior lawyer Ahmad Awais on September 25, 2018 took charge as Advocate General of Punjab (AGP) following a notification issued by the provincial government.
- Senior law officers and staff of the advocate general office welcomed Mr Awais on his first visit as principal law officer of the province

3. Trump, Qureshi agree on rebuilding Pak-US ties

- Foreign Minister Shah Mehmood Qureshi on September 25, 2018 met President Donald Trump at a reception the US leader held for the world leaders attending the 73rd session of the UN General Assembly.
- "I met with President Trump at the reception where I had the opportunity to discuss Pak-US relations with him. I requested him that we have had cordial relations and need to rebuild them," Qureshi said while speaking to PTV.
- The foreign minister said that he received a "positive response" from President Trump who said they also intend to "rebuild" their relations as well.
- Qureshi said that Pompeo also sent his greetings to Prime Minister Imran Khan. "Send my regards to your leader," Pompeo told Qureshi.
- FM Qureshi is scheduled to address the UN General Assembly on Saturday, September 29.

READ Also: Day by Day Current Affairs (September 9, 2018) | MCQs for CSS, PMS, NTS

4. PM approves 'Re-Charge Pakistan' project

- Prime Minister Imran Khan September 25, 2018 approved, in principle, a proposed project named 'Re-Charge Pakistan' for better management and utilisation of floodwaters to restore and re-charge the groundwater.
- He gave the in principle approval while chairing a briefing on the functions of Ministry of Climate Change here at the PM Office.
- Various measures to tackle air, water and plastic waste pollution were also identified during the briefing.
- The prime minister said tackling climate issues was a priority area for the government.

September 26, 2018: International Current Affairs

5. Trump, Rouhani exchange threats, insults at UN

- US President Donald Trump and his Iranian counterpart Hassan Rouhani exchanged taunts at the United Nations General Assembly on September 25, 2018.
- With Trump vowing more sanctions against Tehran and Rouhani suggesting his American counterpart suffers from a 'weakness of intellect' Trump used his annual address to the United Nations to attack Iran's 'corrupt dictatorship', praise last year's bogeyman North Korea and lay down a defiant message that he will reject globalism and protect American interests.
- But much of his 35-minute address was aimed squarely at Iran, which the United States accuses of harbouring nuclear ambitions and fomenting instability in the Middle East through its support for militant groups in Syria, Lebanon and Yemen.
- 'Iran's leaders sow chaos, death and destruction,' Trump told the gathering in the green-marbled hall. 'They do not respect their neighbours or borders or the sovereign rights of nations.'
- President Rouhani, addressing the assembled world leaders later, sharply criticised Trump's decision to withdraw from the 2015 nuclear deal, said he had 'no need for a photo opportunity' with Trump and suggested the US president's pullback from global institutions was a character defect.
- Besides calling out Iran, Trump also criticised China for its trade practices but made no mention of Russia's interference in Syria's war or its suspected meddling in US elections.

READ Also: Day by Day Current Affairs (September 13, 2018) | MCQs for CSS, PMS, NTS

6. South Sudan doctor wins UN refugee prize

- A South Sudanese doctor who runs an overcrowded hospital with a dimly-lit surgical theatre and no regular supply of general anesthetics on September 25, 2018 won the UN refugee agency's prestigious Nansen award.
- Evan Atar Adaha's Maban hospital in the South Sudanese town of Bunj serves more than 144,000 refugees from Blue Nile state in neighbouring Sudan, UNHCR said.
- The hospital's X-ray machine is broken, but Atar and his team perform nearly 60 surgeries per week in a room with just one light, with staff using "ketamine injections and spinal epidurals" instead of general anaesthesia, the agency said.
- UNHCR chief Filippo Grandi said Atar's "profound humanity and selflessness" had saved thousands of lives.

7. High-speed train linking Makkah with Madina launched

- Saudi King Salman on September 25, 2018 inaugurated a high-speed railway linking Makkah and Madina, described by local officials as the biggest transportation project in the region.
- The Haramain High Speed Rail system will transport Muslim pilgrims, as well as regular travellers, 450 kilometres (280 miles) between the two cities via the Red Sea port of Jeddah in two hours.
- This project is considered the biggest transport project in the Middle East.
- Thirty-five passenger trains capable of travelling at speeds of 300 kilometres per hour will slash the travel time from several hours to 120 minutes.
- The rail project, dogged by several delays, was built at a cost of more than \$16 billion, according to Saudi media.
- In 2011, Saudi Arabia signed a deal for a Spanish consortium to build the rail track, supply 35 high-speed trains and handle a 12-year maintenance contract.

8. UK life expectancy stalls for first time since 1982

- Life expectancy has fallen in Scotland and Wales and has stopped improving for the first time since 1982 in Britain as a whole, according to official data released on September 25, 2018.
- Life expectancy for both men and women fell by 0.1 years in Scotland and Wales and by the same amount for men in Northern Ireland, according to the Office for National Statistics.
- Overall life expectancy for girls born between 2015 and 2017 was 82.9 years no change on the previous figure for 2014-2016.
- The figure for baby boys was also unchanged at 79.2 years.
- Janet Morrison, chief executive of Independent Age, an elderly charity, called the figures 'concerning'.

READ Also: Day by Day Current Affairs (September 27, 2018) | MCQs for CSS, PMS, NTS

9. Swedish parliament ousts PM in vote of no-confidence

- Sweden's centre-right opposition and the far right ousted Prime Minister Stefan Lofven in a vote of no-confidence on September 25, 2018, as the left and right blocs wrangle over who can form a new government after neither won a majority in September 9 elections.
- Lofven's departure was widely anticipated. The head of the opposition four-party Alliance, Ulf Kristersson, has since election night insisted that he intends to try to form a government.
- A total of 204 of 349 members of parliament voted against Lofven, while 142 voted in favour. The speaker of parliament, Andreas Norlen, will begin talks on Thursday with the leaders of the eight parties represented in parliament to determine who is best placed to form the next government.

September 26, 2018: Sports Current Affairs

10. Afghanistan pull off tie against India

- Stockily built Mohammad Shahzad knocked a brilliant hundred as spirited Afghanistan pulled off a last over tie against India in a Super Four match on September 25, 2018.
- Shahzad's 124 laid the foundation of Afghanistan's fighting total of 252-8 in 50 overs before they bowled out India in 49.5 overs for the same total.
- Needing seven to win off the final Rashid Khan over, Ravindra Jadeja hit a boundary off the second ball before taking a single off the next. Last man Khaleel Ahmed then took a single, but Jadeja holed out off the fifth to give Afghanistan a morale boosting tie with the defending champions.